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FINAL DETERMINATION TO CLOSE
THE CLARKSVILLE, NY POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
SERVICE BY RURAL ROUTE SERVICE

DOCKET NUMBER 1358213 - 12041

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is issuing the final determination to close the Clarksville, NY Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Feura Bush Post Office, located five miles away.

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster retired on March 31, 2010. Since the postmaster vacancy an OIC has been installed to operate the office. Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue.

The office was studied for possible closing or consolidation due to the following reasons: Office is currently vacant; management initiated study to determine if regular and effective service can be provided through alternate means. Feura Bush Post Office is 5 miles away

The Clarksville Post Office, an EAS-13 level, provides service from 07:30 to 11:30 and 13:00 to 16:45 Monday - Friday , 09:00 to 11:00 Saturday and lobby hours of 07:30 to 17:00 on Monday - Friday and 08:00 to 11:30 on Saturday to 214 post office box or general delivery customers and no delivery customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD Mail, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail.

The retail window averaged 31 transaction(s) accounting for 32 minute(s) of retail workload daily. With minimal workload, the Postal Service feels that effective and regular service will be provided by rural route service. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$80,569 (210 revenue units) in FY 2008; \$74,195 (194 revenue units) in FY 2009; and \$65,391 (171 revenue units) in FY 2010. There were one permit mailer(s) or postage meter customer(s).

On May 02, 2011, representatives from the Postal Service were available at Clarksville Community Church (Reformed), 1997 Delaware Turnpike, Clarksville, NY 12041 to answer questions and provide information to customers. 63 customer(s) attended the meeting.

On April 22, 2011, 214 questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the Clarksville Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at the Clarksville Post Office. 97 questionnaires were returned. Responses regarding the proposed alternate service were as follows: 11 favorable, 53 unfavorable, and 33 expressed no opinion.

When this final determination is implemented, delivery and retail services will be provided by the Feura Bush Post Office, an EAS-15 level office. Window service hours at the Feura Bush Post Office are from 08:30 to 11:30 and 13:00 to 16:45, Monday through Friday, and 09:00 to 11:00 on Saturday. There are 137 post office boxes available.

The proposal to close the Clarksville Post Office was posted with an invitation for comment at the Clarksville Post Office and Feura Bush Post Office from May 17, 2011 to July 18, 2011. The following additional concerns were received during the proposal posting period:

1. **Concern:**

Customer concerned that frequently thie PO Box doesn't have room for a single day's mail. Wonder if the USPS has allowed fo the cost of handling the overflow of mail if new location is visited less frequently.

Response:

Across the U.S., Postal Service™ PO Boxes are available in five sizes. However, not all Post Office locations have every size. Be sure to select the right size for your mail volume and schedule. Our smallest box (Size 1) fits 10–15 letter-sized envelopes or up to two rolled magazines. Start with a Size 2 box if you receive more than 15 mailpieces a week. Size 3, 4, or 5 is recommended if you receive magazines and catalogs. **ACCUMULATED MAIL** We encourage you to empty your box regularly. You can make a special arrangement with the postmaster if you are not able to pick up your mail. Complete PS Form 8076, Authorization to Hold Mail, or create your request online at usps.com, and we'll take care of it. Hold Mail orders are good for only 30 days. If the volume of your incoming mail repeatedly exceeds the capacity of the box you are using, we may require that you use Business Pickup (Caller) Service, change to a larger box (and pay the applicable fees), or apply for one or more additional boxes. Your service may also be suspended.

2. **Concern:**

Customer expressed a concern about their 911 address.

Response:

911 addresses are generally given by the county's 911 coordinator. The Postal Service does not establish 911 addresses. Any questions concerning your 911 address should be directed to the county's 911 coordinator

3. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern over the apparent lack of interest by the Postal Service for the needs of the community

Response:

The Postal Service is required to provide each community with regular and effective service, using the most cost efficient means possible. The proposed alternate delivery service will meet the mailing and service needs of the community in a more cost effective manner.

4. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service.

Response:

Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously each day.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed from questionnaires, the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:**

Customer expressed a concern about package delivery and pickup.

Response:

Rural carriers will deliver packages that fit in your rural mail box, if the package does not fit in the mail box, the carrier will deliver the package up to ½ mile off of the line of travel, at a designated place, such as on your porch or under a carport. For carrier pick up of packages, you can contact the Feura Bush Post Office, letting the carrier know that you have a package available for pick up. The carrier can deviate from the line of travel in order to receive packages. The rural carrier will accept letters, flats or packages up to 13 ounces for mailing. The carrier will estimate the cost and provide a receipt for any money received. On the following delivery day the carrier will provide change or a bill for the amount over the estimate. Packages over 13 ounces may be picked up if the postage was printed online or with a traceable meter.

2. **Concern:**

Customers asked why their post office was being discontinued while others were retained

Response:

Post offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is a vacancy in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.

3. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern about having to erect a rural mailbox

Response:

Customers are not required to erect rural mailboxes. Customers may receive PO Box service from the administrative Post Office located 5 miles away.

4. **Concern:**

Customers questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance

Response:

Carrier service can be and, in this case, is more cost-effective than maintaining a postal facility and a postmaster position. The Postal Service estimates an annual savings with this change.

5. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about a change of address

Response:

Customers who retain their PO Box or currently have street delivery WILL NOT be required to change their address. ONLY customers electing to close their PO Box and begin street delivery would be required to change their address, if a final determination is made to close or consolidate this office.

6. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about mail security

Response:

Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

7. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about obtaining services from the carrier
- Response:** Retail services provided at the post office are available from the carrier. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience. Listed below are some services available from the carrier and how to obtain them.
- PURCHASING STAMPS BY MAIL**
The Stamps by Mail Program provides customers the opportunity to purchase stamps, envelopes, and postal cards by using Form 3227-R, Stamp Purchase Order (Rural), available from the post office or the carrier. Commemorative stamps and stamp collecting products are also available. The customer addresses the postage paid order form envelope, encloses payment by personal check or postal money order made payable to the US Postal Service, and mails the form (postage-free) or leaves it in the mailbox for the carrier to pick up. Most orders are processed overnight, and some immediately.
- PURCHASING POSTAL MONEY ORDERS**
Customers may purchase money orders by meeting the carrier at the mailbox, completing an application, and paying the carrier (in cash) the price of the money order, plus the fee. The carrier gives the customer a receipt for the application. The money order is completed when the carrier returns to the post office, and a money order receipt is left in the customer's mailbox on the next delivery day. Most customers provide the carrier with a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the completed money order is mailed to its destination. If customers prefer, the completed money orders will be returned for verification on the next delivery day.
- SPECIAL SERVICES**
Special services such as certified, registered, Express Mail, delivery confirmation, signature confirmation, and COD may be obtained from the carrier by leaving a note in the mailbox, along with the appropriate payment. The carrier will provide the services that day and leave a customer receipt in the mailbox on the next delivery day.
- HOLDING MAIL**
Customers who will be away for an extended time, such as a vacation, may request that their mail be held at the post office during their absence. Upon return the customer asks the post office to resume delivery.
8. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens
- Response:** Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the administrative postmaster for more information.
9. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the mailboxes being damaged by snowplows
- Response:** Please contact the administrative postmaster to determine the proper mailbox location and installation method that would help alleviate this concern. Placing the mailbox on a long, swinging, horizontal pipe is one method often used to avoid damage by snowplows.
10. **Concern:** You were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service
- Response:** Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.

11. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to adminoffice Post Office to pick up their mail
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the post office to pick up their mail. Customers are not required to travel to another post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the administrative postmaster.
12. **Concern:** Customers felt the cost of postage was increasing while service was decreasing
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about the increasing cost of postage while service was decreasing. The Postal Service is not immune to rising costs affecting every family and business. We do not receive tax dollars to cover the cost of operations and must adjust our prices to cover our costs. The Postal Service Governors are responsible for approving prices for all Postal Service products and services. For mailing services prices, such as stamp prices, the Postal Service announces the new prices each February and they become effective each May. The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) reviews the new pricing for compliance with the price cap and other provisions of the Postal Act of 2006.
13. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about a change of ZIP Code
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about a change of ZIP Code. The proposed change of the ZIP Code is necessary due to 911 addressing requirements.
14. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to make an address change on their bank checks and stationery
- Response:** Customers who retain their PO Box or currently have street delivery WILL NOT be required to change their address. ONLY customers electing to close their PO Box and begin street delivery would be required to change their address, if a final determination is made to close or consolidate this office.
15. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about later delivery of mail
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about delivery time. A customer's location on a carrier's line of travel determines the time of day mail is delivered. This, of course, precludes providing early delivery of mail to every customer because, no matter how we structure a route, somebody must be last. We do, however, carefully consider the volume of mail for each route so that we can deliver the greatest amount of mail at the earliest possible hour. With the largest fleet of delivery vehicles in the world we must pay special attention to energy conservation measures, to minimize vehicle and fuel expenses. When the price of gasoline goes up one cent per gallon our total gasoline cost rises more than \$8 million. Therefore, when structuring a route, we must balance our goal to deliver as much mail as possible as early as possible with the need to minimize the travel distance a route must cover.
16. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels. If you live less than one-half mile from the line of travel, the carrier will attempt delivery of accountable items and large parcels to the customer's residence. If the live over one-half mile away or is not home when delivery is attempted, a notice will be left in the mailbox. Large parcels will be left outside the mailbox or at a designated location or a notice will be left in the mailbox. Attempted delivery items will be taken back to the administrative Post Office. Customers may pick up the item at the post office, request redelivery on another day or authorize delivery to another party.

17. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the limited hours of operation at the post office
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about the limited hours of operation at the post office. Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. A workload analysis conducted indicated the office had declined from an EAS- to an EAS- level office, qualifying for hours of service per week. The CPO will provide at least the same number of window service hours as the post office.

Some advantages of the proposal are:

1. The rural and contract carriers may provide retail services, alleviating the need to go to the post office. Stamps by Mail order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. CBU's can offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay post office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the post office to pick up mail.

Some disadvantages of the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services may be provided by the rural or contract delivery carrier.
2. Meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier at the box to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in the mailing address. The community name will continue to be used in the new address. A carrier route address will be assigned.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

Clarksville is an unincorporated community located in ALBANY County. The community is administered politically by New Scotland. Police protection is provided by the Albany County Sheriff. Fire protection is provided by the Onnesquethan Fire Co.. The community is comprised of retirees, self-employed and those who commute to work at nearby communities and may work in local businesses.

Businesses and organizations include: Clarksville Elementary School Clarksville Community Church, Super Oil, Master Seal of Albany, Matt's Sons industrial, Heldeburgh Siding, Dunsten Painting, Onesquethan Fire Co. . Residents may travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the Clarksville Post Office will be available at the Feura Bush Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the Feura Bush Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed from questionnaires, the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity
- Response:** A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the Feura Bush Post Office name and ZIP Code in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory.
2. **Concern:** Customers questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance
- Response:** Carrier service can be and, in this case, is more cost-effective than maintaining a postal facility and a postmaster position. The Postal Service estimates an annual savings with this change.

3. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about growth in the community
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about growth in the community. The growth of a community does not depend on the location of a post office. Based on information obtained by the Postal Service, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service will be able to accommodate future growth.
4. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about the loss of a gathering place and an information center.
- Response:** Residents may continue to meet informally, socialize, and share information at the other businesses, churches and residences in town.

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will not adversely affect the community.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster retired on March 31, 2010. The noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) may be separated from the Postal Service. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected. Since the postmaster vacancy an OIC has been installed to operate the office.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$ 26,521 with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-13, No COLA)	\$ 36,381
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$ 12,188
Annual Lease Costs	<u>+ \$ 10,382</u>
Total Annual Costs	\$ 58,951
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	<u>- \$ 32,430</u>
Total Annual Savings	<u>\$ 26,521</u>

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

VI. SUMMARY

This is the final determination to close the Clarksville, NY Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Feura Bush Post Office, located five miles away.

The postmaster retired on March 31, 2010. If the office has a noncareer PMR(s), they may be separated from the Postal Service; however, attempts will be made to reassign the employee(s) to a nearby facility. No other employee(s) will be adversely affected. The workload has declined. Effective and regular service will continue to be provided by rural route service.

The Clarksville Post Office provided delivery and retail service to 214 PO Box or general delivery customers and no delivery route customers. The daily retail window transactions averaged 31. There are one permit mailers or postage meter customers.

There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services may be available from a rural or contract delivery carrier, which could alleviate the need to travel to a Post Office for service. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$26,521 annually. A disadvantage to some will be in meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions with rural or contract delivery carrier.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this final determination is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. Support Materials. Copies of all materials upon which this final determination is based are available for public inspection at the Clarksville Post Office and Feura Bush Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. Appeal Rights. This final determination to close the Clarksville Post Office may be appealed by any person served by that office to the Postal Regulatory Commission at 901 New York Ave NW, Suite 200, Washington DC 20268-0001. Appeals must be received by the Commission within 30 days of the date this final determination is posted. If an appeal is filed, copies of appeal documents prepared by the Postal Regulatory Commission or the parties to the appeal will be made available for public inspection at Clarksville Post Office and Feura Bush Post Office during normal office hours.



Dean J Granholm
Vice President of Delivery and Post Office Operations

08/19/2011

Date